

Masthead Logo

Archives Alive

3-7-2014

A Heartwarming Letter From Camp Shelby

Tomar Kavlashvili
University of Iowa

Copyright © 2014 Tomar Kavlashvili

Hosted by [Iowa Research Online](http://iowa-research-online.org). For more information please contact: lib-ir@uiowa.edu.

Bill definitely hit a home run with this letter

After I finished reading my letter, besides desperately wanting a solidier to fall in love with me, I noticed many thought-provoking aspects in it. Throughout the letter, Bill is courting Evelyn by convincing her rhetorically of how awesome he is. Bill starts of the letter by appealing to Evelyn's empathy, and making her feel bad about not writing to him. He questions the adequacy of himself, turning the issue on himself instead of with her lack of correspondence. This should make Evelyn question herself rather than become enraged with a needy solidier for assuming she was too lazy to write. He also embeds a compliment in the complaint, lessening the impact of his grievance.

So after he makes her feel bad for not writing, he proceeds to mention what he could do for Evelyn if they got together, playing to natural emotion of desire. Evelyn has never been to New York, if she gets with Bill she can go. Bill then goes on to talk about how he would take her to a Dodgers game, and what girl doesn't want to be shown New York by a true New Yorker. He uses tactics of mentioning how familiar he is with the Big Apple scene to dazzle and amaze her. By mentioning all the sports he does, it also gives Bill a sense of athleticism, adding to his man credibility. Bill plays up the common idea of being a "real man" by showing how he is an athletic strong solidier, but he also plays up his sensitive side later.

In an attempt to woo Evelyn with his profound words and imagery, in the second and third pages of the letter, Bill goes on to describe the mystery of the moon. Bill first displays how profound he is by asking her about her dreams. By doing this he is proving that isn't like some other simple-minded jock and really wants to know Evelyn. He then goes on to describe a romantic night any girl could hope to dream of. This exhibits Bill's thoughtfulness and attention

to romantic detail, proving the lengths he would go to win Evelyn. With his imagery he sends her directly into the moonlit scene and I can imagine her hanging onto every sweet nothing. But just as you get into the heat of the imaginary night, Bill pulls away leaving anyone wanting more. He even promises to continue his steamy story in the next letter. I'm sure after reading that, Evelyn is sure to start writing more frequently.

For my historical analysis, I chose to focus on the sports Bill mentions and how baseball was affected by the World War II. In 1943, many players had been called to duty, but that didn't stop America's favorite pastime. Records were broken and a Pittsburgh Pirates player invented a new pitch. Also during the war, the [All-American Girls Softball League](#) was established as an alternative to baseball if the major leagues were shutdown. This was the first time women were given the chance to play in the major leagues and attract thousands of fans. The league was wildly popular and included over 600 women. Sadly after the war, the league got less attention as men returned to the field. In 1954 the league shut down but the All-American Girls still represent a fascinating concept in baseball history.

The war had many other effects on the game. [Major League Baseball](#) was missing more than 500 players to the Great War and had to start two weeks late as managers scrambled to fill stadium seats. Many critics were concerned that baseball was wasting manpower when athletic men were needed in duty, but baseball was key to boosting morale in this time of war. [The leftover players also used baseball to help the war efforts.](#) Before a game in Boston, an Armed Forces All-Star team featuring Babe Ruth, Joe DiMaggio and Ted Williams played the visiting Braves to raise money for the war effort. Babe Ruth and Ted Williams later had a home run

hitting contest that raised over 30,000 dollars for the Red Cross to use in the war.

The team Bill focused on was his hometown team of the [Brooklyn Dodgers](#), and the 1940's were a great decade for them. Under the teachings of their manager Leo Durocher, the Dodgers began their climb to fame, receiving their first National League Pennant in 1941. They also played their first world series of many against the infamous New York Yankees. The newfound powerhouse continued to grow until the war when many players were called to duty. After the war, the Dodger came back with a vengeance playing many championship games against the Cardinals and Yankees. In 1947, they signed the first ever African-American player in the major leagues, Jackie Robinson. Due to his ability to play under intense pressure and prejudice, Robinson was wildly successful in the Major Leagues and went on to make history. He was the first ever African-American in the MLB Hall of Fame, and went on to claim Rookie of the Year. In 1947 and 1949 the Dodgers would face the Yankees in two cutthroat World Series. Though they lost both games, the 1940's Brooklyn Dodgers definitely made an impact that would change the way the game is played.

Written By: Jessica Graff

References:

"All-American Girls Professional Baseball League." *League History*. All American Girls Professional Baseball League Players Association, Inc., 2014. Web. 23 Feb. 2014.

Bedingfield, Gary. "Baseball in Wartime - Baseball in WWII." *Baseball in Wartime - Baseball in WWII*. Baseball in Wartime, 2014. Web. 24 Feb. 2014.

"Dodgers Timeline | Dodgers.com: History." *Los Angeles Dodgers*. MLB.com, 24 May 2013. Web. 24 Feb. 2014.

Holtz, Sean. "Baseball History in 1943 American League by Baseball Almanac." *Baseball History in 1943 American League by Baseball Almanac*. Baseball Almanac, 2014. Web. 24 Feb. 2014.

MacArthur, John D. "Symbolism of the Shield on the Great Seal of the United States." *Symbolism of the Shield on the Great Seal of the United States*. Greatseal.com, 2013. Web. 06 Mar. 2014.